

WE CLAIM:

1. A method for communicating among a plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices coupled with a network, said method comprising:
 - identifying, automatically by a first device of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices, a second device of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices available for communication via said network;
 - configuring, automatically, said first device to communicate substantially directly with said second device via said network; and
 - facilitating substantially direct communication of data between said first and second devices.
2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said identifying further comprises:
 - receiving, by said first device, a first identification message periodically transmitted by said second device to all of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices;
 - transmitting a reply, by said first device, to said second device in response to said first identification message;
 - receiving, by said first device, a second identification message transmitted by said second device to said first device in response to said reply; and
 - transmitting a confirmation, by said first device, to said second device in response to said second identification message.
3. The method of Claim 2, further comprising:
 - configuring said second device to communicate substantially directly with said first device in response to said confirmation.
4. The method of Claim 1, wherein said configuring further comprises:
 - appending a representation of said second device to a list of representations of devices available for communication maintained on said first device.

5. The method of Claim 1, wherein said facilitating further comprises:
 - receiving a request from a user of said first device to send data from said first device to said second device;
 - transmitting said data from said first device to said second device.
6. The method of Claim 1, wherein said facilitating further comprises:
 - receiving a request from a user of said first device to send data from said second device to said first device;
 - transmitting a request for said data to said second device; and
 - receiving said data in response to said request.
7. A communications interface for a first diagnostic medical imaging device, said communications interface operative to couple said first diagnostic medical imaging device to a network, said communications interface comprising:
 - identification logic operative to periodically identify, via said network, said first diagnostic medical imaging device to other diagnostic medical imaging devices coupled with said network and receive a response therefrom, said identification logic being further operative to recognize other diagnostic medical imaging devices which identify themselves to said first diagnostic medical imaging device;
 - configuration logic coupled with said identification logic and operative to automatically configure said first diagnostic medical imaging device to communicate with said other diagnostic medical imaging devices which at least one of respond and identify themselves; and
 - communication logic coupled with said identification logic and said configuration logic and operative to facilitate communication of data between said first diagnostic medical imaging device and said other diagnostic medical imaging devices which at least one of respond and identify themselves.
8. The communications interface of Claim 7, wherein said identification logic is further operative to periodically broadcast an identification message to said other diagnostic medical imaging devices, said identification message operative to

solicit responses from said other diagnostic medical imaging devices, wherein upon receipt of a solicited response from a one of said other diagnostic medical imaging devices, said identification logic is further operative to transmit a confirmation request to said one of said other diagnostic medical imaging device, and wherein said configuration logic is further operative to configure said first diagnostic medical imaging device based on receipt of a response to said confirmation request.

9. The communications interface of Claim 7, wherein said identification logic is further operative to receive an unsolicited identification message from one of said other diagnostic medical imaging devices, said identification logic being operative to transmit a reply message to a sender of said unsolicited identification message and transmit a confirmation message to said sender in response to receipt of a confirmation request.
10. The communications interface of Claim 7, wherein said communication logic is further operative to receive a selection from a user of data and one of said other diagnostic medical imaging devices, said communication logic being operative to transmit said data from said first diagnostic medical imaging device to said one of said other diagnostic medical imaging devices.
11. The communications interface of Claim 7, wherein said communications logic is further operative to receive a selection from a user of one of said other diagnostic medical imaging devices, said communications logic being further operative to request that said one of said other diagnostic medical imaging devices identify data stored therein in response to said selection, and wherein a representation of said identified data is provided to said user, said communication logic being further operative to receive a selection from said user of data from said identified data and, in response to said selection, transmit a request for said data to said one of said other diagnostic medical imaging device.

12. An communications architecture comprising:
 - a network;
 - a plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices, each of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices being coupled with said network;
 - each of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices being operative to automatically discover at least one other of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices via said network and facilitate communications therebetween.
13. The communications architecture of Claim 12, wherein each of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices further include a communications interface, said communications interface operative to couple said diagnostic medical imaging device with said network, said communications interface being further operative to:
 - transmit, periodically, an identification message to all other of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices;
 - transmit a reply message in response to receipt of said identification message from another of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices, said reply message being transmitted to a sender of said identification message;
 - transmit a confirmation request in response to receipt of a reply message from another of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices, said confirmation request being transmitted to a sender of said reply message; and
 - transmit a confirmation in response to receipt of a confirmation request from another of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices, said confirmation being transmitted to a sender of said confirmation request; and
 - enable communications with a sender of said confirmation request;
 - enable communications with a sender of said confirmation.
14. The communications architecture of Claim 12, wherein said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices include at least one device selected from the group comprising: diagnostic a medical image acquisition system, a diagnostic medical

imaging reviewing workstation, a diagnostic medical imaging server, and a diagnostic medical patient monitor.

15. The communications architecture of Claim 12, wherein said network comprises at least one of a wired and wireless network.
16. An communications architecture comprising:
 - a plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices;
 - networking means for interconnecting each of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices; and
 - wherein each of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices comprises means for automatically discovering at least one other of said plurality of diagnostic medical imaging devices via said network and facilitating communications therebetween.